

2.2 MOTION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS 2014 AND CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION Council - Derwent Valley

Decision Sought

That the Local Government Association of Tasmania request the Electoral Commission to hold a plebiscite at the next Local Government Elections to be held in October 2014 on Constitutional Recognition for Local Government in both the Federal and State Constitutions.

Background

This matter has been discussed at General Meetings for over two years, and in recent times Local Government was asked and supported the provision of funding for a poll to be undertaken at the last Federal Election, as we all know this did not occur.

A lot of time and effort and funding was used to inform communities in regard to constitutional recognition for Local Government, and some of the monies budgeted by councils was subsequently returned to all Councils.

It is now an ideal opportunity, because most of the work has been completed, save to say, the holding of the poll, and that funding may be available in council's budgets to hold a plebiscite at the Local Government Elections in October 2014.

This will then provide Local Government with the view our communities have in regard to constitutional recognition in our State.

LGAT Comment

Local Government is already recognised in the State Constitution so care would need to be taken as to the actual proposal. With regard to seeking broad support for recognition in the Commonwealth Constitution it should be remembered that the original proposition to actually conduct a referendum was to be coupled with a dedicated and significant education and advertising campaign to demonstrate the benefit and value of councils to communities.

There is some risk that a process not supported by an active advertising campaign may hamper a positive outcome at a future date.